

Fall 9-21-2016

# Hidden in Plain Sight: Why Is Our History So Hard To See?

Catherine Holochwost PhD

La Salle University, holochwost@lasalle.edu

Alex Palma

La Salle University, palmaa2@student.lasalle.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/explorercafe>



Part of the [Public History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Holochwost, Catherine PhD and Palma, Alex, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Why Is Our History So Hard To See?" (2016). *Explorer Café*. 47.

<http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/explorercafe/47>

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Explorer Connection at La Salle University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Explorer Café by an authorized administrator of La Salle University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [careyc@lasalle.edu](mailto:careyc@lasalle.edu).

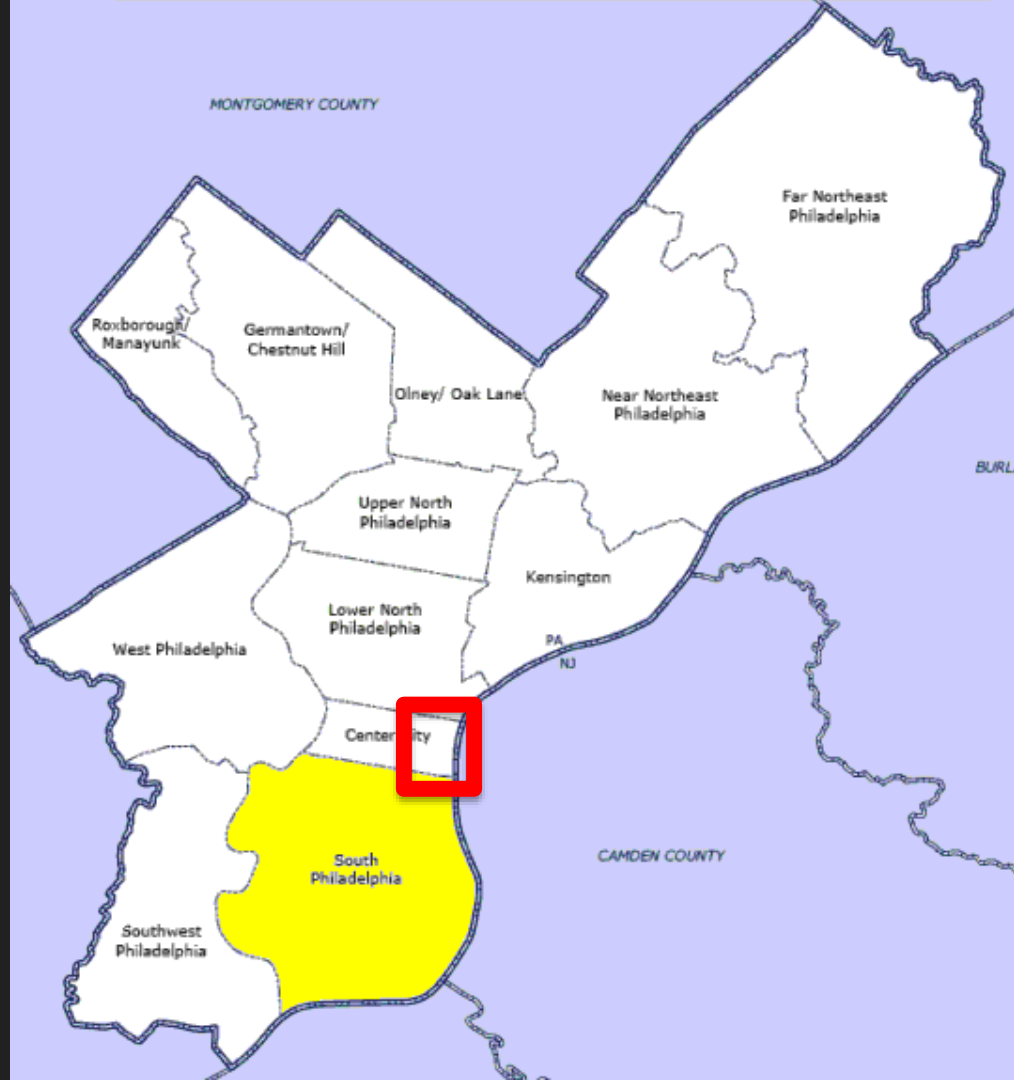
# Hidden in Plain Sight

Professor Catherine Holochwost, Fine Arts Department  
Alex Palma, M.A. Program in Public History

1. Emotions, memories, and places matter to history



History sites in Philadelphia?



# 10<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut: Then and Now





# Dates, names, events!

# {THE RENNAISSANCE

1400

### ① Civic Humanism in Florence

Council of Constance ②

End of (3)  
The great schism

1425

#### ④ Rule of Cosimo de' Medici

⑤

⑦ Fall of Constantinople

Invention of  
Printing with  
movable type

11 Alex V

1000

⑨ French Invasion of Italy

Michela  
Sistine  
Painting

1. Use of Reason and Logic flourishes in Florence
2. Council of Constance attempted to solve problem of heresy.
3. The Great Schism divided Christianity in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox.
4. Cosimo de' Medici ruled Florence behind the scenes.
5. Printing caused widespread growth of classical knowledge and ideas.
6. Peace of Lodi signed begins 40 yrs of Italian peace.
7. The Ottomans capture Constantinople.
8. Isabella and Ferdinand unite Castile and Aragon.
9. France invades Italy starting the Italian wars.
10. Julius II commissioned Michelangelo to paint Sistine Chapel.
11. Alexander VI is Pope (1492-1503)
12. Julius II becomes Pope (1503-1513)
13. Machiavelli writes The Prince, governs politics of Renaissance.
14. Leo X is Pope (1513-1521)
15. Sack of Rome - French attack Rome, loses battle, Rome cannot pay soldiers, mutiny, Rome sacked.
16. Book of Courtier defines social conduct of elite.

# RENAISSANCE

(1450 - 1600)



Pathos: emotional connection with  
history

History should validate those emotions  
and memories!

# Creative ways to “do” history

Mobile history/outreach

Community Gardens

Makerspaces

Interactivity, digital and otherwise

Artistic depictions

# Mobile History



“We use oral history, objects, archival research, social practice art, and conceptual art in collaboration with the people who live, work, and play in Philly's places and spaces...”

# Community gardens





# Makerspaces



Makerspace at Glenn Foerd Mansion



Makerspace at Newark Museum in Newark, New Jersey

# Interactivity and Digital history

## Ghosts of a Chance, an alternate-reality game



The module version of "Ghosts of a Chance" was available at the Smithsonian American Art Museum from October, 2008 through October, 2010. Over 3,000 people completed the multimedia scavenger hunt, deciphering codes, following treasure maps, sending text messages, and uncovering hidden objects. For more information on the game, please contact Georgina Goodlander at [GoodlanderG\[at\]si.edu](mailto:GoodlanderG[at]si.edu).

The team that created "Ghosts of a Chance" launched an ambitious new game called "Pheon" in October 2010. Like GOAC, there is both an [online](#) and a [module](#) component to the game. Take a look, and have fun!



The Alternate Reality Game (ARG) "Ghosts of a Chance" ran from July 18 through October 25, 2008. This was the first ARG in the world to be hosted by a museum, and was a collaboration between the Smithsonian American Art Museum and CityMystery. Follow the links below to explore the archive of the game.

- [Teaser "eyes" website](#)
- [unfiction.com](#) player thread
- [Flickr group](#)
- Daniel Libbe: [Facebook](#) | [MySpace](#)
- Daisy Fortunis: [Facebook](#) | [MySpace](#)
- [Artifact Game website](#)
- [Final Report](#)
- [Credits](#)



**OFFICIAL HONOREE**

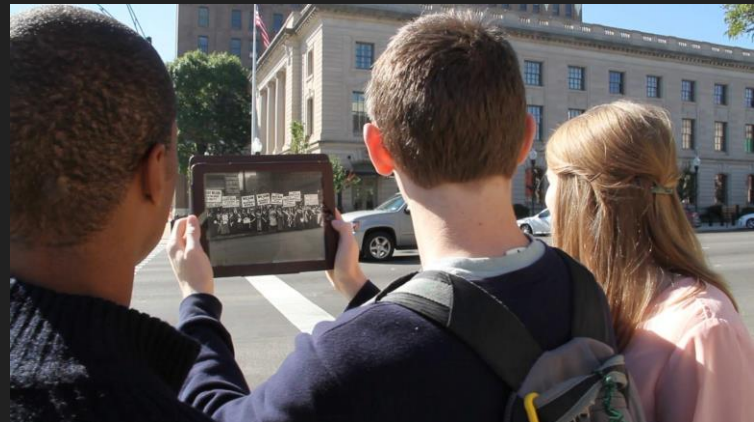
**MISSIONS COMPLETED:**

- Necklace of the Suburban Betrayer
- Predictor of Tomorrow's Dream
- Can Art's Republic
- Drama of a Tragedy
- History
- Escape Quilt

**GHOSTS OF A CHANCE**

about time to play search the story

## CLIO, a digital history app.





# Art

WEB Dubois  
and the 7<sup>th</sup>  
ward...

Located at 6<sup>th</sup>  
and South





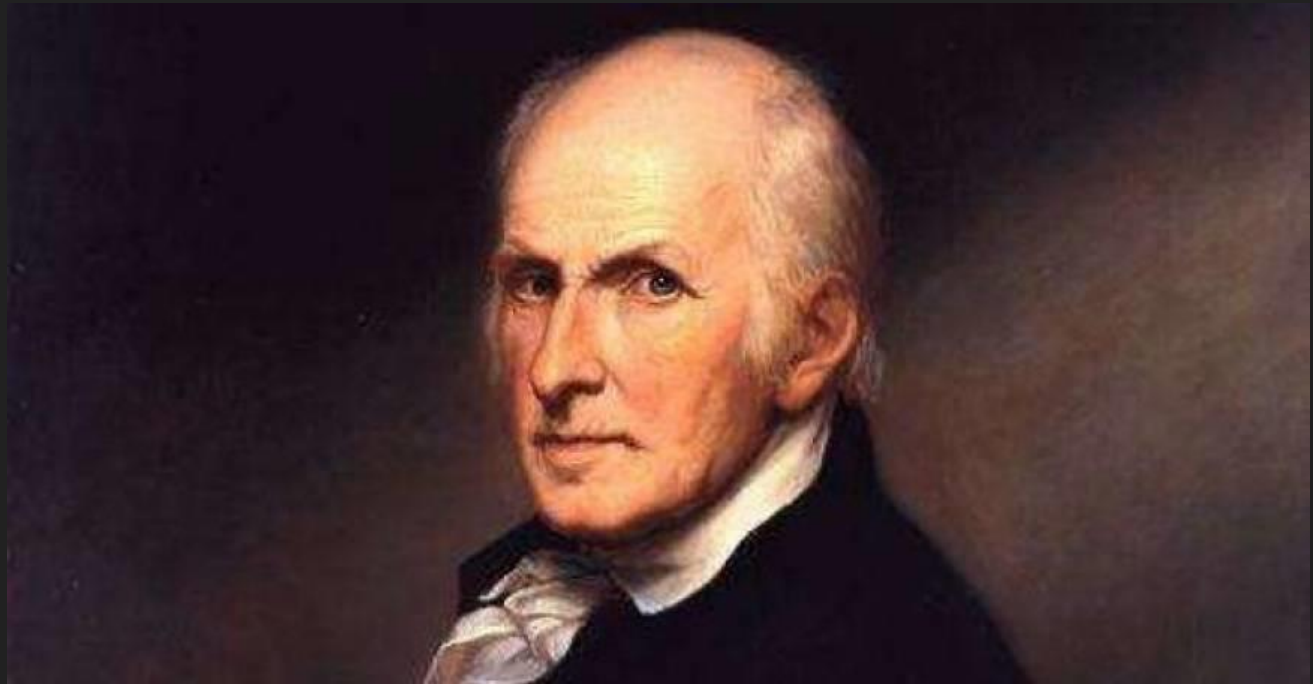
# Ellen Harvey, New York Beautification Project, 2001



2. History is all around us on La Salle's campus



# Belfield and Peale House



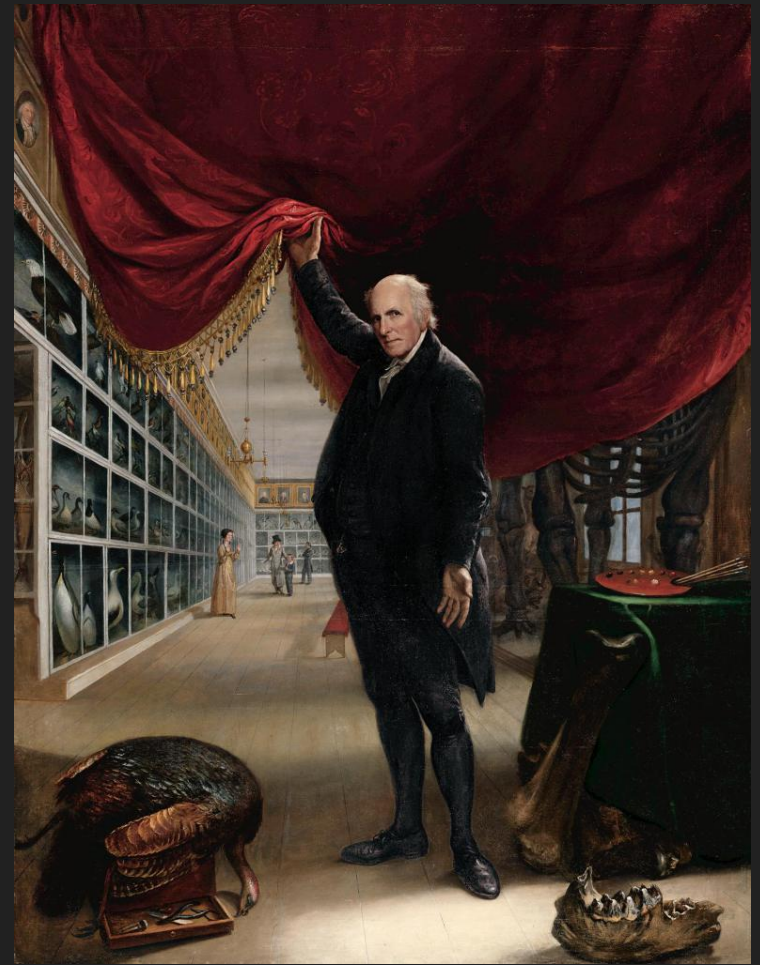
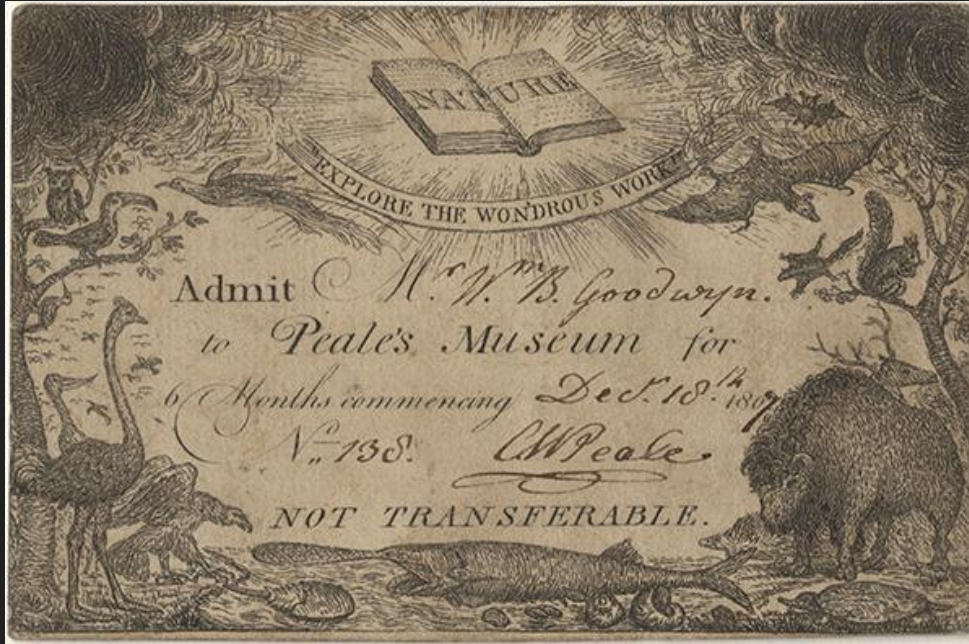


Charles Willson Peale,  
*Washington at the Battle of  
Princeton, 1782*

# Charles Willson Peale

- Artist, museum operator

Admission ticket to Peale's museum from 1807



Charles Willson Peale, *The Artist in His Museum*, 1822

Prairie dog – not the original one from Lewis & Clark





# Belfield, 1904 and today

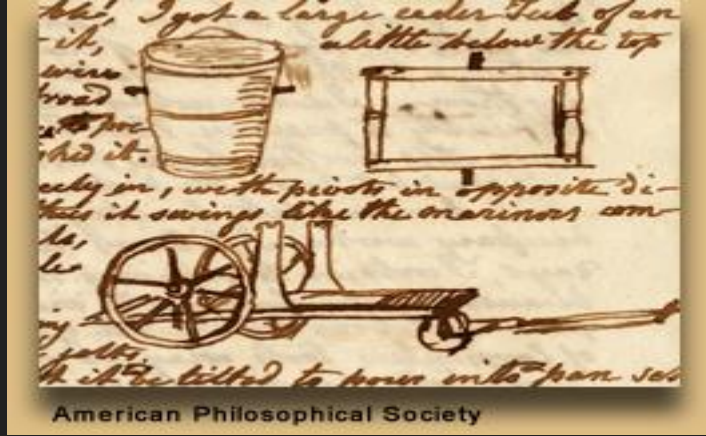




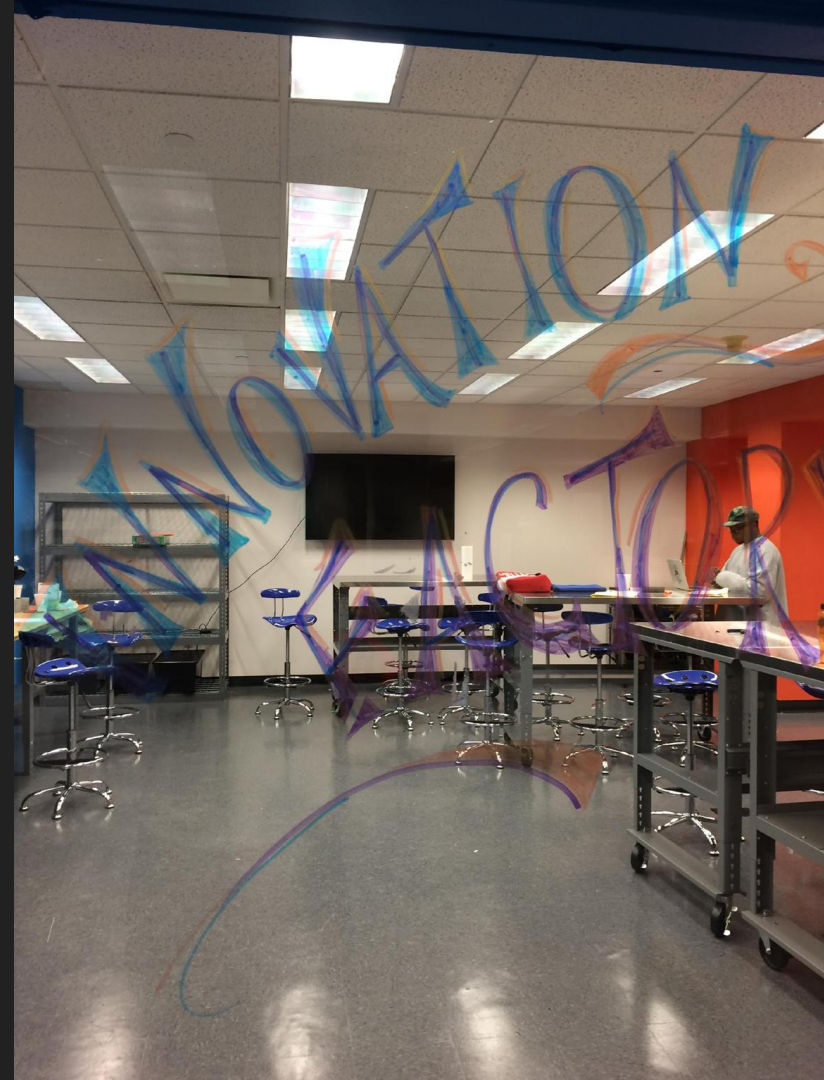
Charles Willson Peale, *Cabbage Patch, The Gardens of Belfield*, ca. 1816



# Peale's "Spill-Proof Milk Cart"



I got a large cedar Tub of an oval form made with a cover to it, a little below the top are 4 pegs to rest a strainer on, a wire [illegible] made to fit its place, a broad rim to run the wire through. to prevent the wire from rusting I varnished it. A frame to let the top move freely in, with pivots in opposite direction to those in the Tub, and thus it swings like the mariners compass. The carriage has 3 wheels, the hind wheels with a crooked axle tree to let the carriage be low. The strainer prevents the splashing of the milk from perpendicular jolts."



# Models for more efficient fireplaces, Collection of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia



American Philosophical Society



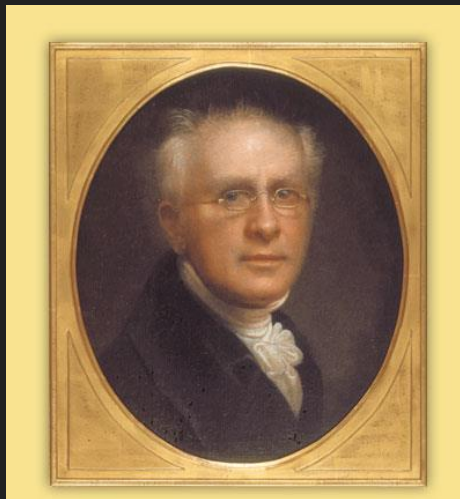
American Philosophical Society



# Some of Peale's 17 (!) kids



Titian Ramsay Peale



Rembrandt Peale



Rubens Peale



Sophonisba Anguiscola

Germantown



# Germantown White House

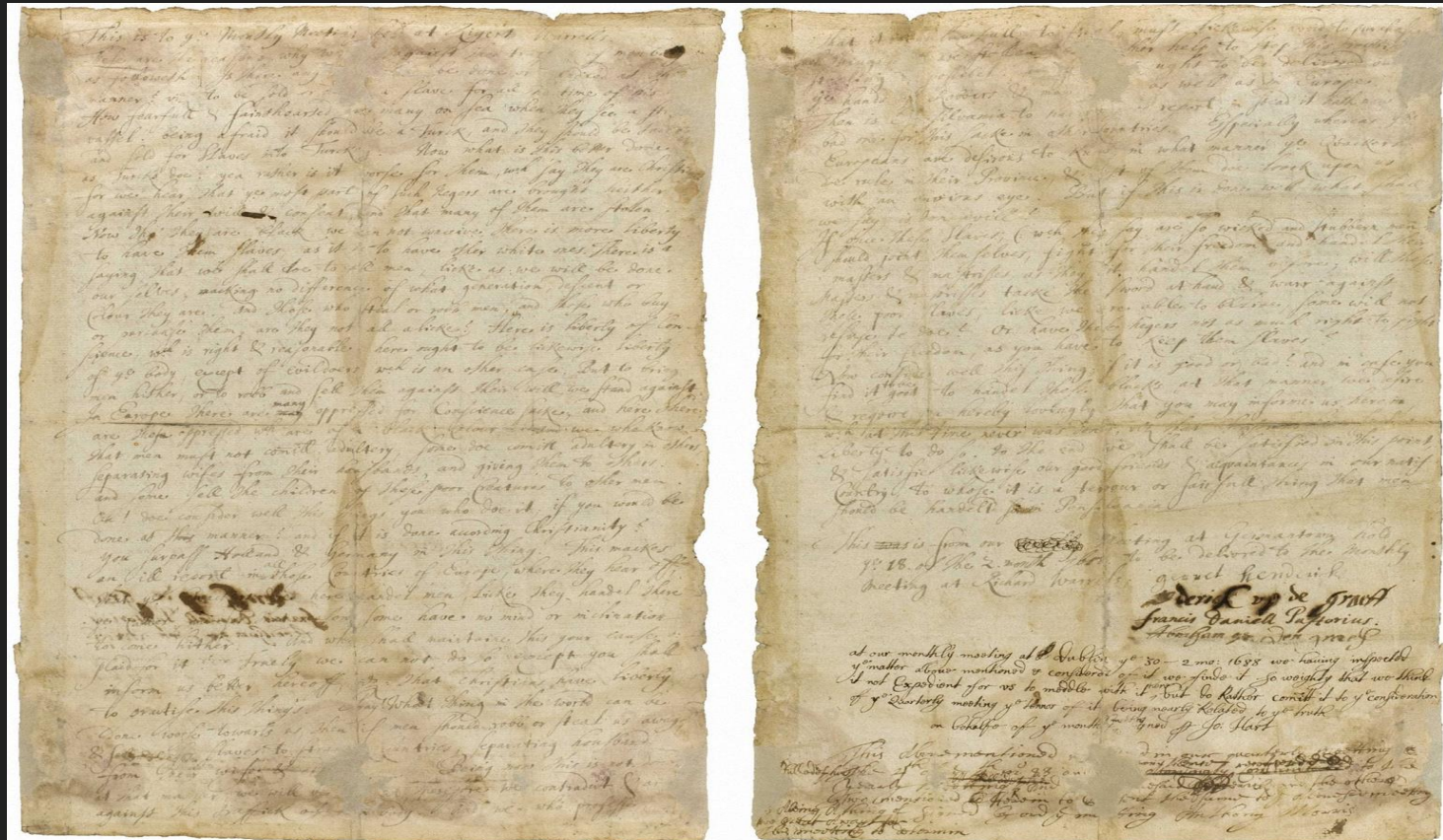


# The “Republican Court” at Philadelphia

- Rufus W. Griswold, *The Republican Court, or, American Society in the Days of Washington* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1855)



# First Formal Protest Against Slavery, 1688 by Germantown Quakers Thome Kunders and others





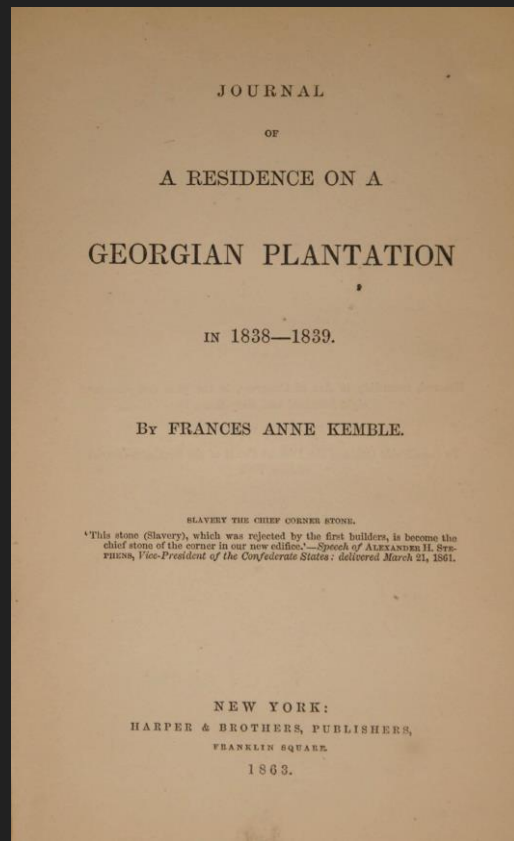
Thomas Sully, *Fanny Kemble*, oil painting, 1834



Butler Place, one of Fanny's homes. Used to be located at Olney and Nedro



# International best-seller, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation*







"All who are slaves don't wear the collar,  
nor do all that wear it, show it."

# A Matter of Conscience

a new play about Fanny Kemble

By  
Joyce E. Henry

Ritter Center Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA.  
November 18, 19, 20 - 7:30 p.m.

## Play about Fanny

Written by Joyce Henry. This playbill is from a performance of the play during the 1990s.

# Mary and Frances Ann Wister Studio Building



# Frances Ann Wister

- Founding member of Pennsylvania Society for the preservation of landmarks.
- Wister family owned many historic homes and mansions.



# Fine Arts Studio



For many years, the house Frances Wister lived in was used as an art studio by La Salle. Today, remnants of that studio remain.



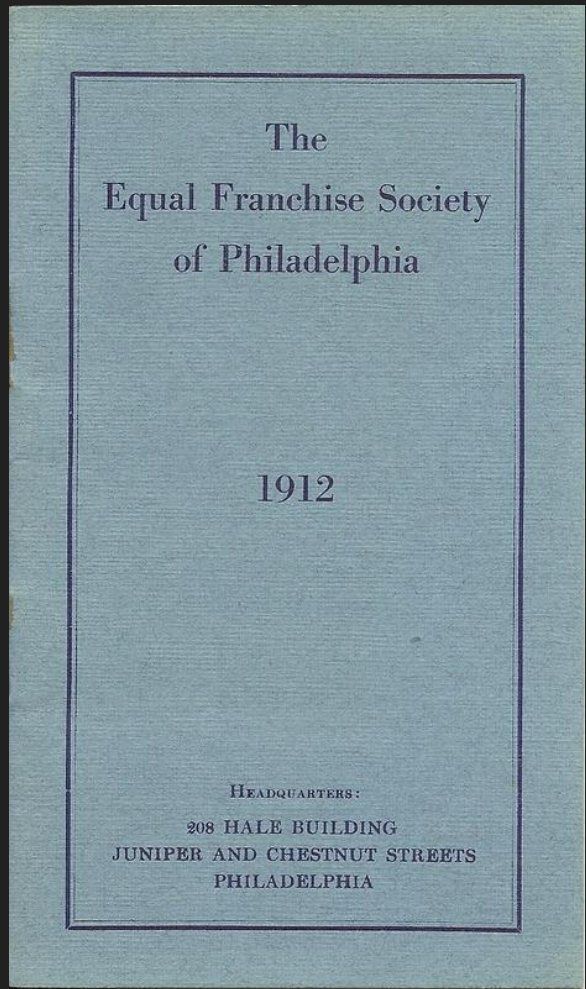
# Mary Channing Wister

- Worked towards justice from the position of privilege.
- Married to author, Owen Wister. Known for being the father of the “Western”.



# Equal Franchise Society of Philadelphia

Mary Channing Wister was director of the Equal Franchise Society of Philadelphia.



## WISTER'S BAD MONKEY

Regular Trampas Disposition,  
But Meets Its Virginian.

Owen Wister, author of "The Virginian," who has a country place at Honey Avenue and York roads, owns, among other things, a pet monkey. The monkey answers to the name of Billy, and was a gift to the novelist from a friend not long ago. Billy is blue-tinted in color and possesses a frivolous disposition.

Because of this Billy created a furore on the York road and the Wister estate after escaping from his quarters yesterday. Incidentally, the monkey sent his keeper to the Jewish Hospital for repairs and amused hundreds of car-riders on York road lines.

First he scampered across the flower-beds, creating much havoc. Then he took possession of York road, and his frantic endeavors to make friends with a number of Fern Rock girls at Nedro avenue frightened the women into hysterics. Up and down the road Billy held sway for almost an hour, dodging trolley cars and motors as if he had been trained for that purpose.

By this time the escape was known at Wister place, and Billy's keeper went for him. The monkey recognized the keeper and a hot chase down the highway followed. Billy had a good lead. The keeper and a score of suburbanites pursued him. Billy finally climbed to the top of a walnut tree and chattered defiantly to his pursuers.

The monkey remained there all night. Cries and pleading were without avail. In the morning came hunger, and a dainty meal close to the window of the room where Billy had his home quarters proved enticing. He jumped down from the tree, landed on the window ledge and leaped into the arms of his keeper, who was waiting for Billy. Immediately there was a furious mix-up. Billy began fighting, scratching to get away, and despite the wounds inflicted by the teeth and nails of the monkey.

The keeper finally got the monkey down. Then he went to the stable, where he had his wounds treated. The monkey's wounds are decidedly serious.

## Owen Wister's "Monkey Incident"



# Grumblethorpe



# Powel House



# Elfreth's Alley



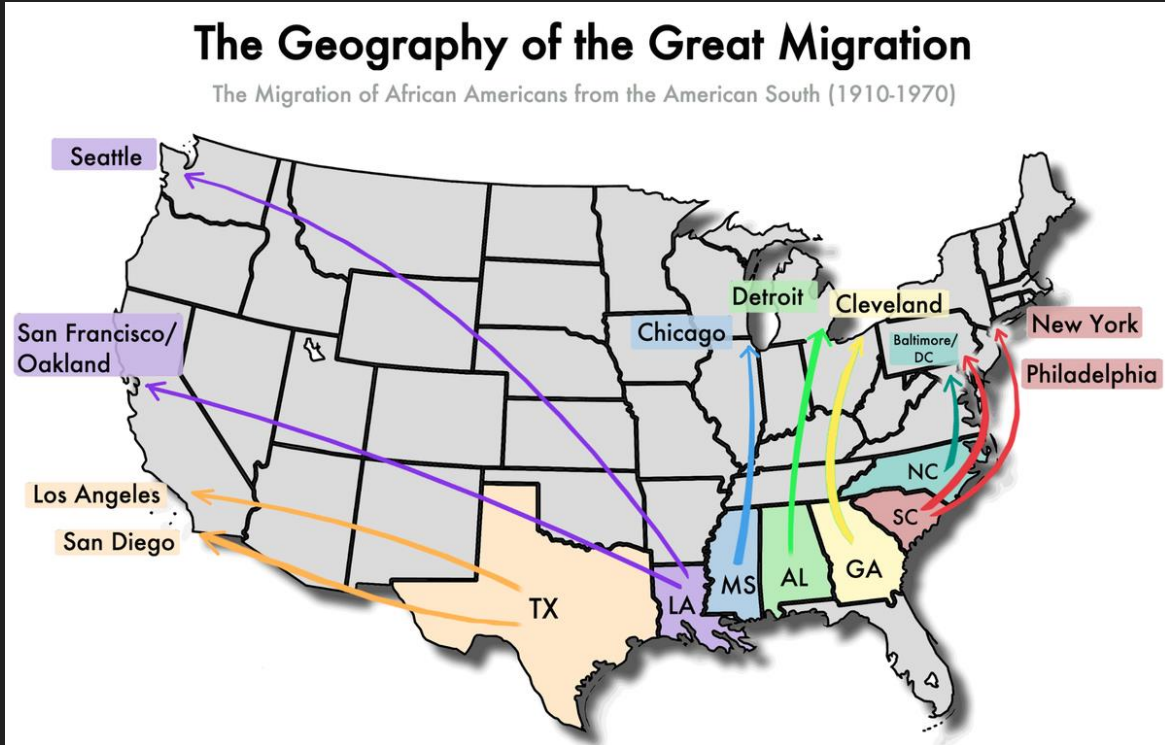
The houses that Frances Ann Wister saved





# The Great Migration / White Flight

The area around La Salle (including Germantown) was part of a phenomenon called “The Great Migration.”



During the 1940s a black artist named Jacob Lawrence did a series of tempera paintings depicting the “Great Migration.”





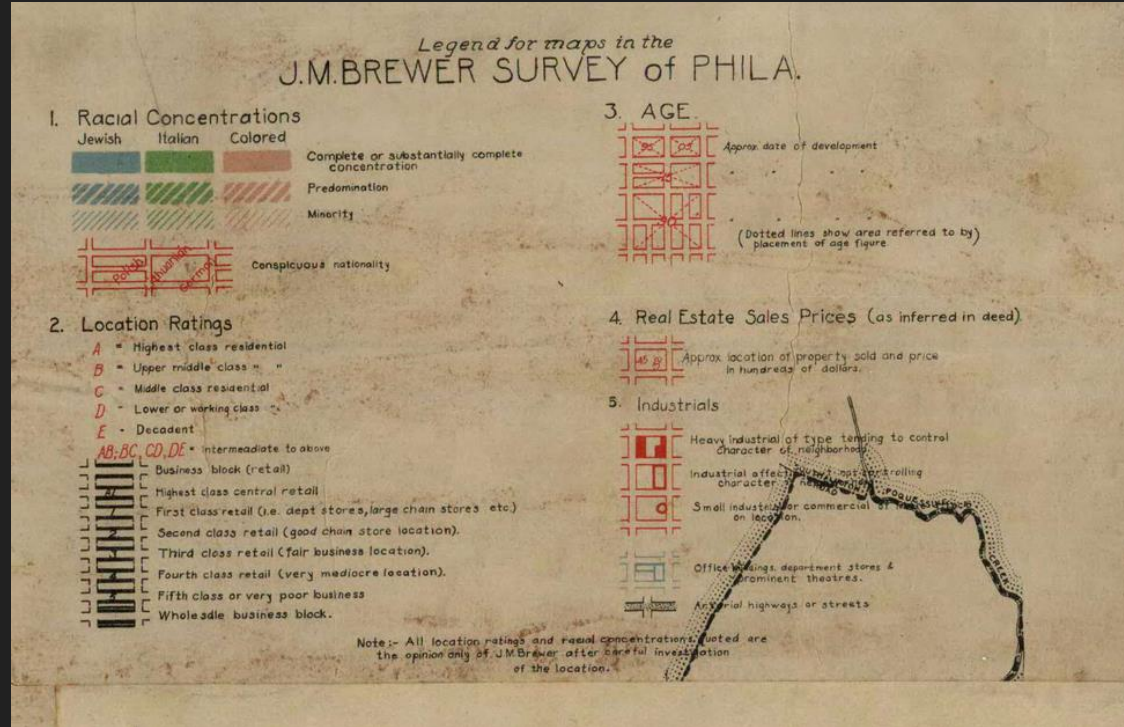


# Redlining

A literal “red line” was drawn around neighborhoods that were not solely white.

Started with the National Housing Act of 1934.

Continued until 1968.





# Excerpt from *Race: The Power of Illusion*

Time: 1:36

<https://youtu.be/UmMs8eQP4T0?t=101>



# GERMANTOWN GROUP STARTS FIGHT FOR HOUSING PROJECT

PHILADELPHIA, Mar. 14.—Leading Germantown residents have organized in the interest of fighting down opposition to the proposed government low-cost housing project, currently being held up because of protests.

A group known as the Citizens' Committee has been set up from the Germantown Mutual Improvement Association, which has organized as a co-ordinating, non-political body to better conditions or the race in the erstwhile exclusive Philadelphia residential section. Mrs. Margaret Miles is president.

The committee has been meeting every Friday formulating plans and planning strategy to thwart opponents of the housing project. This Friday another meeting will be held, at which time petitions favoring the housing venture will be reviewed. Dr. V. Pincock Bailey is chairman of the committee.

# MAKES ANONYMOUS GIFT OF \$1000

PHILADELPHIA, Mar. 14—Bolstered by an anonymous gift of \$1,000, the West Philadelphia section surged ahead in the Douglass hospital's \$20,000 budget drive last week. The gift boosted West Philly's team beyond the \$1,100 mark. The team is headed by Mrs. De Haven Hinkson, wife of Dr. De Haven Hinkson, a member of the Douglass staff.

The North Philadelphia team, captained by Mrs. Lewis Tanner Moore, dropped back in second place with a total of \$987. Other teams reporting include South Philadelphia, Mrs. Austin Norris, captain; West Philly Second, Mrs. Maceo T. Morris; North Philly Second, Mrs. William Brown; and Germantown, Mrs. Baxler.

The following churches reported with contributions last week: Miller Memorial, \$3.75; St. Simon's, \$20.77; St. Augustine's, \$3.25. Walter George Smith school, 19th and Wharton streets, reported \$18.50 last Thursday.

A "Roundup Tea" will be held at the hospital, Lombard street near 16th, next Sunday afternoon, at which time holders of certificate books will make their final report.

# Gtn. 'Y' Board Sanctions Bar On Negro Boys

Christians Sidetrack Principles to Maintain Jim Crow Policy

Completely disregarding their motto of putting into practice "the principles of Jesus" and to afford its members an opportunity to help each other live as Jesus lived, the Germantown Y. M. C. A., through the medium of a letter signed by Henry E. Baton, president, and sent to J. Gordon Baugh, 3rd, president of the Germantown Spur Society, has gone on definite record as forbidding the use of its swimming pool to Negro candidates for the swimming team of Germantown High School.

This action by Mr. Baton followed a protest several weeks ago by the Spur Society in conjunction with newspaper representatives, who sought an explanation when the Negro boys were not allowed to practice along with the other team aspirants. Dr. Leslie P. Seelye, principal of Germantown High School, immediately disbanded the team, declaring that he would not tolerate any segregation or humiliation of any student at his school.

Mr. William F. Crown, executive secretary, who assumed responsibility for the order against the Negro boys, stated at the time he was interviewed that there was no rule or policy which denied privileges to any racial group, but that he acted on his own initiative and that this matter had to be referred to the Board of Managers for authoritative action. The communication from Mr. Baton was the "authoritative action."

Several outside factions have resented the entire procedure, one of which is the National Association of Submarine Post Office Employees. In a letter to Mr. Crown they fully "condemned the Jim Crow pretense of the Y. M. C. A., and unanimously voted to refrain from holding its future membership meetings at the Central Y. M. C. A." The letter bore the signature of Jules Splayser.

The Spur Society, which is an organization of Germantown High School graduates formed for the purpose of assisting and encouraging Negro students of Germantown, intends to carry on its fight on the premise that any artificial barrier created such as segregation tends to offset the many advantages accomplished in other lines of school work.

The officers of the Spur Society are: J. Gordon Baugh, 3rd, president; Charlotte Ross, vice-president; Adella Byrd Harper and Lucille E. Porter, secretaries; and Marshall L. Tyner, treasurer.



3. You should care about history *even if* you think you hate it!

4. Why? Because stories matter to history.



## 5. What kind of stories should we tell? How?

Small groups of 3-5. Discuss, come up with ideas, and hopefully share with the group.

# Credits

This presentation would not have been possible without the assistance and guidance of:

- Prof. Catherine Holochwost
- Sarah Seraphin, Special Collections
- John Baky, Director of Connelly Library
- Alison Danilak, Administrative Assistant